

GEF/C.9/8

GEF Council
April 30 - May 1, 1997
Agenda Item 11

NOTE ON THE ORGANIZATION OF THE GEF ASSEMBLY

Recommended Council Decision

The Council reviewed document GEF/C.9/8, *Note on the Organization of the GEF Assembly*, and approves the approach described therein for organizing the first GEF Assembly in India in April 1998. The Council agrees that its first regular Council meeting in 1998 will be convened in conjunction with, and at the same location as, the Assembly meeting. The Secretariat is requested to prepare for Council review at its November meeting a provisional agenda and draft rules of procedure for the Assembly together with other initial documentation identified in paragraph 11 of the note. The Secretariat is also requested to submit to the Council for its approval at the November meeting a supplement to the FY98 GEF corporate budget to cover the costs of the Assembly.

SCOPE OF MEETING

1. The Instrument provides that the Assembly, comprised of representatives of all Participants, is to meet once every three years. The primary purpose of the Assembly is to review the policies and operations of the GEF.

ATTENDANCE

2. At present there are 160 governments participating in the GEF. All Participants will be invited to send representatives to participate in the Assembly meetings. It is estimated that up to one thousand people will participate in the first Assembly.

3. Recognizing that the Assembly is the opportunity for all GEF Participating Governments to exchange views on the policies and operations of the GEF, Government are encouraged to send high level representatives familiar with GEF, in particular with GEF-financed activities in their own countries.

4. The following will also be invited to send representatives to the Assembly:

(a) Implementing Agencies;

(b) Trustee;

- (c) STAP;
- (d) Convention on Biological Diversity;
- (e) Framework Convention on Climate Change;
- (f) Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and its Multilateral Fund;
- (g) United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;
- (h) United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development;
- (i) Regional Development Banks;
- (j) United Nations Specialized Agencies that have participated in GEF projects;
- (k) Accredited NGOs; and
- (l) Private sector.

LOCATION AND TIMING

5. The Assembly will be convened in India in April 1998. The meeting will be convened for two and a half days, from a Monday to a Wednesday. The meeting will be preceded by a two day regular Council meeting combined with a one-day special Council meeting, both of which will be convened at the same location as the Assembly from Wednesday to Friday of the week before the Assembly.

AGENDA

6. The following substantive items might usefully be included in the agenda for the Assembly:

- (a) Chairman's overview of the general policies and operations of the GEF;
- (b) Reviews by the Implementing Agencies;
- (c) Review of GEF on the basis of an assessment and other documentation prepared by the GEF Secretariat and recommendations prepared by Council including:
 - (i) review of the GEF policies,
 - (ii) programmatic review of GEF operations, including a review of the operational strategy and lessons learned,
 - (iii) review of operational practices and lessons learned;

- (d) Review of GEF financing;
- (e) Review of GEF relations with the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Framework Convention on Climate (the Convention Secretariats may be requested to prepare a report for the Assembly on their perspectives);
- (f) Overview report by STAP on its work; and
- (g) Report on Membership.

DOCUMENTATION

7. The following documentation might be prepared to provide a basis for discussions consistent with the agenda items proposed above:

- (a) Chairman's overview report;
- (b) Study on GEF accomplishments;
- (c) Study on project lessons;
- (d) Project implementation reviews;
- (e) Report on GEF financing;
- (f) Report by Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- (g) Report by Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change;
- (h) Report by STAP on its work; and
- (i) Report on GEF membership.

RULES OF PROCEDURE

8. Draft rules of procedure will be prepared for adoption by the Assembly. These will be based on the rules of procedure of the Council. The Council will prepare the draft rules at its meeting preceding the Assembly.

BUDGET FOR THE ASSEMBLY

9. A budget for the Assembly will be presented for Council approval at its meeting in November 1997 as a supplement to the FY98 GEF corporate budget. This budget will include limited resources to finance the participation of one to two representatives from recipient countries, in particular the least developed countries.

10. Costs incurred as a result of holding the meeting in India will be shared between the GEF and the host government. The Secretariat will negotiate with the Government of India the details as to how such costs may best be shared.

PREPARATION OF THE ASSEMBLY

11. The Council, assisted by the Secretariat, will be responsible for preparing the Assembly. The following preparations will be undertaken by the Council:

Council meeting - May 1997

Approve note on the Assembly, including substantive agenda items.

Council meeting - November 1997

Council will review:

- (a) Provisional agenda;
- (b) Draft rules of procedure;
- (c) Study on GEF accomplishments;
- (d) Study on project lessons;
- (e) Project implementation reviews (1995 and 1996); and
- (f) Annual Report for 1997.

Special Council meeting - (week preceding the Assembly)

Council will:

- (a) Finalize provisional agenda;
- (b) Finalize rules of procedure; and
- (c) Finalize any proposals to the Assembly.

PANELS AS PART OF THE ASSEMBLY AND PARALLEL ACTIVITIES

12. The GEF will organize a number of roundtables and workshops which would serve as a less formal means for providing information on GEF activities and sharing ideas on issues concerning the global environment. It is proposed that two roundtables or panels be organized within the agenda of the Assembly. Ideas for these two roundtables, which may be combined as appropriate, are as follows:

(a) *roundtable of eminent persons* - to reflect upon the state of the global environment, challenges ahead - this roundtable could include some Ministers and other high level persons; the President of the Special Session of the General Assembly could be invited to reflect upon the decisions of the Special Session.

(b) *panel of CEO and Heads of the Implementing Agencies* - the CEO and Heads of the Implementing Agencies may be invited to discuss their views of the GEF, its contribution to the global environment and the international system, and their ideas on the future development of the Facility.

(c) *roundtable of the elected co-Chairs* - it is proposed that a discussion be held among the persons who have served as elected co-Chairs of the GEF Council. They may be invited to discuss the evolution of the GEF and their vision of the future.

13. It is also proposed that a number of roundtables or workshops be organized during the weekend between the Council meetings and the Assembly. Visits to GEF-financed projects may also be arranged for participants during this weekend. Some proposed ideas for presentations are:

(a) *workshops presenting GEF projects* - presentations would be made by project directors - workshops can be organized for each focal area;

(b) *roundtables on biodiversity and climate change - a mixed perspective*: discussions to include some key government officials, convention secretariats, project directors, NGOs', scientific experts, private sector - a possible topic could be to identify and focus on the key issues for the next three years;

(c) *roundtable of scientists organized by STAP* - this panel could discuss emerging scientific issues for the global environment;

(d) *roundtable on national perspective* - the host Government might be invited to organize a discussion of the global environment from a national perspective - this might include local and national government officials, NGOs, scientists and academics, indigenous communities; and

(e) *roundtable organized by NGOs* - the accredited NGOs could be invited to submit ideas of possible discussion groups or seminars that they would like to organize.